

NEWARK COMMUNITY EDUCATION CONVENTION: RECLAIMING THE VILLAGE

CONVENTION REPORT

Purpose of Conference

On November 21 and November 22, the Mayor's Office in collaboration with community partners, including advocates, educational organizations, and community leaders hosted the Newark Education Community Education Convention. This conference was convened for the following reasons:

Dialogue about the problems facing our schools and solutions to these problems is critical to sustainable transformation of schools. It is also essential that there is a collective forum for assessing the impact of current strategies and analyzing data about the progress of our students and schools. The city and its residents must be brought together to have critical conversations about education and the well-being of our children that inform public education in our city.

There are numerous stakeholders who hold in common the agreement that dialogue essential and that local control matters. Every institution with a primary focus on education was informed about the planning process when planning began and offered an invitation to participate.

Change and collaboration can only occur when stakeholders are brought together to engage in collective learning, to talk and plan together, to provide decision-makers with their insights about what matters to them and how to keep moving forward, and to give all stakeholders the opportunity to take action steps.

Residents have a voice in determining how we define the community's role shaping the system of public education in our city. Local governance of our schools requires collective dialogue that forms consistent and empowered voice that shapes the direction of public education in our city.

Conference Attendance

Reclaiming the Village was attended by 407 individuals representing every facet of education in our city. 243 of registered attendees identified organizational affiliations. The remaining 164 did not. At least two attendees from the following organizations were registered:

Abbott Leadership Institute
Alif Muhammad's Nia School
American Federation of Teachers
Barat Foundation
Big Brothers Big Sisters
BRICK
Center for Supportive Schools
Citizen Schools
Citizen's Campaigning
City of Newark
COMCARE
Cooperman Scholars
Council of New Jersey Grantmakers
Education Law Center
Education Reform Now
EOEA/NJEA
Essex County College
I.T.V. IT TAKES A VILLAGE, INC.
ironbound community corp
Ivy Hill Neighborhood Association
KIPP New Jersey
La Casa de Don Pedro
Montclair State University
NAACP-Newark, NJ

NAACP-Irvington, NJ
NAACP-Oranges/Maplewood, NJ
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Newark Arts Education Roundtable
Newark Charter School Fund
Newark Education Workers (NEW) Caucus
Newark Public Schools
Newark Public Schools School Board
Newark Science and Sustainability, Inc.
Newark Students Union
Newark Teachers Association/NJEA
Newark Teachers Union
Newark Trust for Education
Newark Youth Court
Nubian Family Chiropractic
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan New Jersey
PULSE
Rutgers Graduate School of Education
Scholastic
Secondary Parent Council

Collective Visioning

During the opening keynote of the second day of the conference, Poverty is NOT Destiny: Strategies for School Communities to Unlock the Innate Potential of all of our Children, attendees engaged in collective table work focused on the idea of “Gifting all Students.” Attendees were first asked to identify the outcomes of an educational system that identified all students as gifted and emphasized student strengths as the entry point to engagement and learning. After identifying outcomes, or aspirations, they held for our students, tables were then asked to identify inputs that would lead to the desired outcomes. The section below includes the outcomes and inputs generated by each table.

GIFTING ALL STUDENTS	
Inputs	Outcomes
Mastery of the English Language and the meaningful exposure to other languages.	Speak fluently in multiple languages.
Mandatory Preschool, socialization of students and parents	Secure environment to learn and interact.
Revise the curriculum and make sure staff development is ongoing & aligned to the curriculum.	Comprehension, Media Messages and their impact.
Strong focus on Literacy from Pre-K- 12th Grade in and out of the classroom.	Embodiment of Nutrition and Physical Activity
Good Early Childhood Education	How core classes relate to various careers
Debate Teams throughout school tied into the curriculum.	
Restore budget items that have been cut to include nutrition, physical activities, security, staff and etc.	
Infusion of careers and their connections to each subject area.	
Multiple entry points to each _____?	Enthusiastic learners
Incorporate Jazz/ Musical stylings in appropriate lessons. (Art, Dance, Painting and etc.)	Fun creative environment
Demystify the process of gaining access to Higher Education	Open for questions
Less teacher led instruction and more student directed instruction (peer to peer interaction).	Children making a connection (btw they learn with their lives)
Activating proper knowledge	Work and play together
Positive reinforcement	Children should go on learning beyond the school day.
Reintroducing the historical richness of Newark.	
Caring open adults in the building	Communication skills translate their ideas (demonstrate learning in multiple ways)
Strong leaders and access to good training	Curious Learners
	Speak truth to power (student bullying)
	Eager

	Problem solution "Learning from each other"
	Community Development
	Taking Risk
	Care
	Collaboration
	Exploring
	Love Learning
	Reflective
	Leadership (Roles, Responsibility and Directing)
	Environment outside the classroom
	Mandating small classrooms, low ratios and more personalized attention
	Students engaging in their own interests more throughout the day
	More ownership of own work
	More kinesthetic based learning
	Learning is continued beyond the classroom
	Integrated enrichment, interdisciplinary enrichment
	See them be kids and have fun
	Use creative thinking and problem solving
	"Safe" classroom culture
	Peer support
	Real world connections
Educator/Teacher Leaders (Not Business Administrator)	Highly Motivated/Engaged
Peer Tutoring /COOP	Confident/Explain their thinking
Multiple Contexts	Expressing themselves real discussion
Engaging Curriculum	Correct current event to experience and history
Real P.D. (P.L.C.)	Understand and analyze arguments
High Expectations	
Resources/Money (Allocations)	

Consistency	
Enrichment	
Level playing field	
Daily discussion about the news	
Mentoring	
Opportunities to analyze critique arguments	
Better Management	
	Less screaming more understanding of my feeling
	School more quieter so that children can focus
	Community focused schools that enhance cultural competency
	Effective communication more learning not playing paying attention in class
	Listening to the teacher and respecting the teacher
Museums and place with history learning value and experience (arts and cultural organizations that can provide enrichment	Inspired and Engaged students working on real experiences (museums)
Other town trips and cultural places to show places outside of their town.	Engaged in critical thinking
Hands on projects that incorporate all different core subjects and skills in one (project based learning with knowledgeable staff that can guide student success.	Creators of content (art, projects & building)
Adding and keeping up with technological advances, teach kids basic skills, move-up to level year to year.	Technological savvy
Healthier community and positive learning environment, adequate facility (afterschool and summer opportunities to explore different types of learning experiences and styles).	Thinking about something bigger than themselves (Dreams & Goals)
Build realtime situational constructs that challenge kids to think critically.	Public Speakers
Broadcasting community meetings that promote parental involvement in student success via actual involvement at home or in the classroom strategies.	Integrate parents in kids learning during school hours with teachers
Early development of language ability other than their primary language.	Relation to real world experiences

	Exposure to other communities (trips, inclass and experience)
	Language (multi-language)(multi-lingual)
What is needed	What the deal looks like
Teacher Parent Community Engagement	Fully Engaged Students
Student Choice or Electives	Self Directed Learners
Leadership Development	Critical Thinkers
Pertinent paths to Enrichment	College & Career Ready
Internship	School as Community
Dual Enforcement	
Advanced AP Courses	
Apprenticeships (Hands on)	
Alumni	
Parent/Community Engagement	
Leadership Development	
Global Arts/Culture Exposure	
Amistad Curriculum	
Wrap Around Services	
Childs as part of Family/ Neighborhood/ Community	
	Teachers who care? Convocation
	Extra Woodshop/ Home Ec./ Auto Mechanic
	Art: Pictures of activities for classroom
	All Student involvement in extra curricular activities sports, clubs, teams, etc.
	Create individual ideas via projects
	Display student work around classroom
	Students create own ideas to show mastery of topics
	Complete engagement from entire class

	Students greeting students when coming to school for a welcoming atmosphere.
Local Control	Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs (Safety & Security (human needs), belonging, esteem needs) , Interdependence-help control, group work, vision aids/technology and self actualization
New Supt.	Group Work: Vision Aids/ Technology
Make Hierarchy and human the basis if change: Various Partnerships	Partnership B/W Parents & Teachers (Know what I am doing with my child, Parents often feel like teachers talk down to them), More events for Teachers & Parents get to know each other
Professional Development & Upgrade technology under a cooperative Newark Superintendent.	
Community School/ Schools as Hubs at the community	
Once a week- Enrichment Day	
No Classes- Pursue extra curriculum activity to assess strengths in areas	
Rotate Teachers above activities	
See Teachers in a new light	
Community involvement in the classroom	
*Get rid of Cami Anderson	
*Get local control of our schools	
* New Governor	
Engage Children: Arts Exposure, Debating, Grammatical Structure, Effective Parent Training (interactive, engagement) and Listening	Communicate with clarity
Cultural/ history of self, introduce to a variety of different avenues of learning, Positive imagery	Enthusiastic about learning
The Child-> Citizen: Parts to a whole, school (microcosm of the community), Family-Class-School-neighborhood-community-world and spirituality	Well-rounded citizen (home, community, world)
Establish community leaders (youth)	

Business	
Learning	
High Expectations because of our student are level head	A campaign to : Challenge Legislator to be active regarding the Abbott Reading now
Low Deficits	
Purchase Curriculum Materials that support this -> Critical Thinking, Junior Great Books	
Purchase Curriculum Materials that support this -> Critical Thinking, Junior Great Books, Project Read -> (Phonics) and scholastics Research based curriculum, Get Rid of Common Core and Engage NY in NJ (It's written 2 years above grade level), Engage NY shouldn't be in New Jersey.	
Critical Thinking	
Decoding Skills	
Effective Communication	
Decision Making Skills	
Inquiring Skills	
Connecting Historic Events to Future Advancement	
Problem Solving Challenging	
Interpert Analysis	
	Education Reform Now (ERN)
	All Children are gifted
	They don't have to FEAR Reading!
	Confidence to learn to achieve any goal
	Let kid's know that they are not limited to one environment/ culture
	Give back to the community/each one teach one
	Reaching our village
Caring (Authentic)	Engagement; developing interest and talents

Awareness & Acknowledgement of Issues (what children bring to school)	Cultural Heritage & Enrichment; pride, confidence & social interaction global citizenship
Establish Community Partnerships Plan: To establish an interaction between students and the community by developing projects which various sections can merge, projects with businesses, seniors, churches, families, parents, grandparents & other relatives; gov.	Community Service/ trips; exploration, discovery; social interaction; commitment
High Expectations (culture...academics...relationship...etc.)	Viable post-H.S. options 9kid are prepared for college/ career success)
School puts energy into developing strong community and family relationships	An environment that promotes love of learning/ school spirit
Viable	Investment in the importance of education
	Achievement; students demonstrating academic success
	Teachers and leaders committed to every single kid
	Using and experts in technology
	Creating new technology
	Excited about the future and understanding their passion and purpose
	Active participants in their communities
	Reflecting their culture
Make After-School programs available with help with the business community.	Use churches to have learning programs from 3:00-7:00, b/c that is when they are at risk to roam the streets.
Sponsor College students to work with our elementary & middle students of Newark, to learn academic and athletic skills.	Corporations put aside money to help our churches with finances
We have to have meetings often that include all state holders, students, parents, teachers, administrators, government people of course college leaders and all Newark business leaders. These forms or meeting must be once a monthly by all Newarkers, those living here, those throughout of town to make sure that the education in Newark is has good and great as any of the suburban school district throughout New Jersey.	Train teachers to form relationships with the students

	Corporations should allocating money to train teachers to learn new teaching strategies.
Effective/Efficient Staff Teacher Development	Students take initiative
Holistic Approach to Education	Cultivate talents
Understanding urban issues by evidence experiential	Begin to take ownership/responsibility of own education
Work ethic	Modelling positive behavior
Investment/ Different types of literacy	Community oriented school
Legacy	Empowerment
Community oriented teaching	Mind is focused (Malcom, 1st grader)
Teaching how to think critically	Body to be success so he can be a learner (Malcom, 1st grader)
High Expectations	
Learning more than education holistically	
Variety of instruction materials/method's	
Providing basic needed; food (health), mental health, physical health.	Expose them to the best-High intellectual creative work.
Passionate Effective Teachers	Communicate their thoughts
Create a World Classroom. Where students communicate with other students, hi classroom around the world.	Make sure they learn and are improving intellectually
Focus on teachings for treating people well- teachings of treating others with compassion in conflicts.	Communicate with each other and the world in a spirit of learnings and sharing
	Engaged and Excited about learning. There should be signs of this.
	Treated with respect and kindness/ compassion
	Time for self-knowledge and awareness and appreciation of differences.
	Be excited to be life-long learners
	Skills to initiate learning in any environment
	Connected and involved in a community for the benefit of others
Return control of schools to Newark residents	Transform their world collectively

Lobby SDA to build schools	Community Involvement (speak up)
Peoples Org. for Progress- Mass Pub Work prog. w/ real jobs	Equity-High Quality Education- (Teachers, Staff & Leaders)
Go to school mtgs.	All children receive the resources are need (redirecting)
Register to Vote	Enrichment Activities based on students strengths-trips and not isolated - explore the world.
Different after-School and Summer School Program Before Care	Safe and Healthy Environment t Inside/Outside Schools
Check kids lead bring doctors into schools to check	Parental Involvement Parent <->Teacher working together
Partner w/medical school, utilize health vans & screenings	Family needs-Equity for family-society-jobs, healthcare, safety & the public works program
Get in touch w/ Parent engagement specialists (but parents can't afford to get off jobs!!) So Family leave act is unpaid-encourage to use plan which gives year off for maternity.	"Welcome Home" community of Belonging
More transparency on the budget financing in school	Confidence/Courage
Reduce \$ in central Office Direct \$ to classroom	Inspiring
City public health dept-> Can it provide medical services for students and parents	
Social media -> get the word out about what's really going on education in NPS.	
Bring materials that can relate the student with the context of culture and race (Maya Angelou, MLK etc. "Mother to Son" poem particular	
Examine and explore the reason s for the piece of literature. Create alternative endings or solutions (Making their own history)	
Showing leadership skills can be shown through group activities, each student can be able to a leader in the group and they are able follow the guidelines of the teacher.	
Reading at grade level	Read 30 mins. Per day of independent choices of subject
Reading independently for at least 30 min/ a day	Read 30 mins. Per day of independent choices of subject
Developing and exercising critical thinking skills	Implement Reasonable & Well thought out actions

Showing leadership skills	Afford students the opportunity to take the lead of any given situation 9i.e. teach a group, present in front of small group of peers/ young adults)
	Give students choices and ask them to explain the reason for their choice
Re-Connecting the village in the context of the school building	High level intellectual learning driven by student passions in school
Parent Training (Community & Stake Holder)	Eager, excited to go schools. Children are learning through the Arts & Music. Teachers are invested.
Resources (Student support, teacher support and family support)	Familiar place, where schools are community
Embed Schools in community	Community will be invested in the schools
Sustainable Community Schools w/ wrap around services	
Empower School Community to inform curriculum	
	More opportunities to work with other students to collaborate -> students
	Using hands-on activity to complement books
	Motivation; Intentionality & Inspired to learn
	Excited about creativity
	Supporting each other more
	Sitting in circles to encourage more interaction
	Connected to real experience
	Confident & Self Esteem Self Image
	Stronger Student voice about what's happening in schools

Collective Action Steps

During the afternoon session, attendees were asked to work together to identify action steps that would allow us to continue to keep the dialogue moving forward. Specifically attendees were asked to respond to the question, “How do we keep the dialogue going” with action steps in these areas: Next Steps, Six Months, and One Year. The section below includes the action steps generated by each table.

ACTION PLAN		
Next Steps	Six Months	One Year
compile information and allow participants to give feedback		
we should not wait 6 months this work needs to continue next week		
we must become more diverse		
Cultural competency-consistent messaging	Reset dialogues	
Small community gatherings (grassroots, election like door to door campaigns)	Townhall meetings	
Social media-twitter/instagram ext		
“truth” campaigns of raw shocking stats &/or images		
Organize the stakeholders into groups committees (parents, leaders, taxpayers, educators, elected officials)		
Put the state in check—They are fulfilling a constitutional obligation NOT running things		
Use Title 1Funds on Parent Education		
Organize community members on issues of concern, parent rights & involvement, civic awareness & engagement		
Use legislative laws and policies of “parent (involvement) rights to empower them to assist with reform		
Civically educate and engage-Develop new community leadership and give civic classes		

Vocational &/or training for available job, college, or career paths—Diverse learning models		
Charter/alternative can be applauded. But when they use public school facilities pay to use space/facilities. Keep their presence transparent and leave a percentage of space for students of the home school		
“Chaos or Community”	Continued communication	re-asses
Social media	Panel discussion	survey
Email list	continue to grow conferences/group meetings/discussion	back here to share
Share videos	Examine outcomes (violence, attendance, board meeting attendance, town and city hall meetings)	
Barbershops/hair salons	survey	
Buses		
One on one/community		
Book clubs		
Formulate groups		
Contact list		
Survey		
Places of worship		
solicit volunteers to meet to honest conversation		
plan how charter and district schools can really share practices		
recruit people from convention to get actively involved in implementing action plans of this convention		

encouraging schools to focus on student responsibility and character development		
continue the conversation about the issues affecting our communities (work/home/play)	real fact checking (follow an issues, then take a look back to asses the validity of story it's first reported)--debunk myths	create parameters around social media so adults are conversing about issues that need to be changed—and seeing it through until change occurs.
get a firsthand understanding of how school buildings are working in neighborhoods		
get comfortable having uncomfortable conversations		
identify expertise of attendees	implement plan	evaluate the outcomes
form committees based on needs that were identified	on-going staff development	revisit plan making necessary adjustment
put together an action plan	make sure resources are available	
formalize times and places for committee sessions		
create a time line and specific outcomes		
literacy program city-wide		
health & nutrition		
core content & career infusion across curriculum		
massive voter registration & voter turnout drives/ Get an urban friendly governor		
Broadcast some of today's sessions on cablevision along with next steps/how to get involved		
Address per pupil funding inequities for all NPS/Newark schools (base parity/maybe publish every school budget)		
Address drop outs involving police and faith-based institutions (look at models that have worked elsewhere)		

Increase opportunities for principals & teachers to come together to share what is working, challenges, & dialogues		
Create a citywide strategy (unified and organized by all stakeholders in conversation) on how to improve education	Create a workplan which outlines action plans for each stakeholder with timelines for each action	Creation of a unified plan
Create a workplan for the strategy & tactics		Newark 2 plan replaces Newark 1 plan
Weekly-bi-weekly meetings		
Including students		
Include the district and higher education institutions		
Include elected officials to gain government support		
Find places to post information (successes/roadblocks)	Reinstatement of neighborhood schools	Have teachers in training
Use facebook to further dialogue	More resources for schools	Coordinate schedule of forums
Utilize the city public access station	Ask Mayor & Rutgers to host more meetings	Mayor's office stuff
		Rutgers stuff
		NPS stuff
		Neighbor stuff
		Wilhemina's stuff
		NCLS
Involvement in the political process	Local control	Local control
Continued dialogues	Educate parents on civics	Accountability for all stakeholders
Working townhall meetings	Involve teachers outside of classrooms	Reciprocal investment with teachers
	Involvement in political process	Involvement in political process